ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*741. [The questioner (Shrimati Kamla Sinha) was absent. For answer, *vide* Col...infra].

Production of sugar

*742. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:†
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that against the projected demand of 118 lakh tonnes of sugar, production is estimated at 133 lakh tonnes by Government.

(b) what is the estimate of the sugar production by the sugar industy;

(c) whether Government are going to create a buffer stock of sugar; and

(d) whether India is going to export sugar?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The sugar production during the current season, 1994-95 (October to September) is estimated to be about 143 lakh tonnes, as against an estimated internal consumption of around 118 lakh tonnes during this season. As on 30.4.95, total production of sugar in the current year is 131.16 lakh tonnes.

(b) The National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories Ltd. and the India Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) in their joint representation dated 17th May, 1995 have estimated that the production of Sugar in the current season to be around 145 lakh tonnes.

(c) and (d) No decision in this regard has been taken.

SHRI SARADA MOHANTY: Madam Deputy Chairman, according to the statement, the production of sugar up to 30.4.95 in the current year is 131.16 lakh tonnes. It is also in the statement that the production will rise to 145 lakh tonnes this year. Our domestic consumption is 118 lakh tonnes per year. I want to know from the Minister why, in view of the fact that we have more production, the Government is going to import sugar from other countries.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: The decision to import five lakh tonnes of sugar was taken in December. At that time, the estimate of production was around 118 lakh tonnes, in fact, less than 118 lakh tonnes. When the production estimate went up, we restricted the import to four lakh tonnes which was already contracted and cancelled the order for one lakh tonnes. When that decision was taken, we did not have this figure. Because sugar is a commodity which everyone uses, we want to make sure that there should be no shortage of sugar. So, as a precautionary measure, we are importing sugar.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Except those who have got diabetes.

SHRI SARADA MOHANTY: Madam, my second supplementary is whether the Government is going to enhance the quota of supply of sugar to the States when they are in need of it as we have got excess sugar production this year.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Government distributes sugar in two ways. One is through the PDS, in which each State has a quota based on its population, and the other way is release of free-sale sugar every month. In June, we will increase the quota of free-sale sugar to seven lakh tonnes. Last year, I think, it was around 5.75 lakh tonnes.

But, then, we have to keep in mind that the interests of the farmers, the consumers and the mills have to be balanced. Any unrestricted increase of sugar in the market may adversely affect the balance that has to be maintained.

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†The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Sarada Mohanty.

SHRI SARADA MOHANTY: Will you release more sugar to Orissa?

उपसभापति : सवाल आपने उसमें डाला क्यों नहीं उड़ीसा के बारे में ?

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Madam, I want to draw your attention to the reply to parts (c) and (d) of the question. It says that no decision in this regard, that is, export, has been taken.

The Prime Minister, while concluding his reply to the debate on the President's Address, indicated to the House that sugar export was being considered due to its overproduction. So, the question would arise because the memory of last year's sugar is very bitter and still the culprits have not been booked. Therefore, I would like to know what is going to be the nodal agency for export. Whether it would be through the Government or through the sugar lobby. I would also like to know whether you will investiate if they have already concluded an agreement at a particular rate with the international companies. My information is that they are already indulging in this sort of practice anticipting sugar export. when we are facing sugar shortage, why don't you build up a buffer-stock. Something has to be done in this regard. I understand that the entire surplus is to be booked as a buffer stock. Having messed up the situation last year, would you be careful and answer the questions posed by me?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Ii regard to the first question I repeat that no decision about export has been taken. In regard to the question about which is the agency which will export and what prices they have contracted, I may inform the hon. Member that any trader is free to contract any price he wants but the Government has not taken at any decision to export sugar. The National Cooperatives Federation and the ISMA have a joint organisation for export called S.J.I.E.F. or something like that. But since no decision to export has been taken, it will be premature to say which agency will do what and at what prices it will be done. In regard to his second question about the buffer stock, I would like to say that we are definitely considering it.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भाडारी : उपसभापति महोदया, मैं मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि इसमें डिसीजन नहीं हुआ है । लेकिन कंसीडरेशन में कौन सी चीजें हैं ? क्या सरकार एक्स्ट्रा स्टॉक को एक्सपोर्ट करने के प्रश्न पर विचार कर रही है या नहीं, और इसके पहली बफर स्टॉक कितना चाहिए, इसके बारे में उन्होंने राय बनाई है या नहीं ?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Our hon. friend, Shri Mehta has said that there was a mess last year, We want to ensure that enough sugar is availbale for consumption. The decision about what measures we have to take about the buffer stock and exports will be taken only after we have firm figures of the production.

श्री सोमपाल : उपसभापति महोदया, चीनी के उत्पादन में उतार-चढ़ाव एक आम बात बन गई है और चीनी का स्थाई रूप से उत्पादन बढ़ाने का एक बहुत आसान साधन यह है कि जो विकेन्द्रीकृत ग्रामीण लघु उद्योग है—खांडसरी, उसमें सरकार ने वैक्यूमपान लगाने की इजाजत अभी तक क्यों नहीं दी हैं ? उसके कारण खांडसारी उद्योग में चीनी की रिकवरी छःसाढ़े छः प्रतिशत रहती हैं । अगर वैक्यूमपॉन इस्तेमाल करने दें तो वही प्रतिशत दस ग्यारह हो जाता हैं । तो क्या कारण है कि सरकार की बार-बार इस घोषित नीति को चालू रखने के वायदे के बावजूद कि लघु और ग्रामीण उद्योग को प्राथमिकता दी जाएगी, तो यह एक विकेन्द्रीकृत और ज्यादा प्रजातांत्रिक तरीका है चीनी के उत्पादन का, तो फिर इस लघु ग्रामीण उद्योग को वैक्यूमपॉन जैसी आधुनिक टैक्नोलोजी इस्तेमाल करने की इजाजत सरकार क्यों नहीं देती और उसके ऊपर क्या विचार कर रही है ? यदि नहीं तो उसका क्या कारण है ?

श्री अजित सिंह : वैक्यूम पॉन टैक्नोलोजी तो शुगर मिल इस्तेमाल करते हैं ।

श्री सोमपाल : वह मुझे मालूम है।

श्री अजीत सिंह : उनके लिए लाइसेंस है, उनके लिए लेवी शुगर हैं, उनके लिए प्राइस कंट्रोल हैं। शुगरकेन की भी प्राइस सरकार ही तय करती हैं। तो आप जो खांडसरी और गुड़ उद्योग के विकेन्द्रीकरण की बात कर रहे हैं, तो उनके ऊपर यह कोई आज रोक नहीं हैं। अगर आप कह रहे हैं कि वैक्यूमपान को डिलाइसेंस कर दिया जाए, तो फिर यह तो पूरी चीजें हैं। फिर आप शुगर इण्डस्ट्री को डिलाइसेंस करने की बात कर रहे हैं।

श्री सोम पाल : अगर आपका यह अनुशासन भी यह मान लें तो क्या आप इजाजत देंगे ? उपसभापति महोदया, बहुत महत्वपूर्ण हैं। अगर खांडसारी उद्योग यह सारा नियंत्रण मान लें तो क्या आप इजाजत देंगे ? उसको कारण बताइए आप ? छोटा उद्योग होने के बावजूद क्यों नहीं आप ऐसा कर रहे हैं ?

उपसभापति : एक एक करके पूछ लीजिए।

श्री अजीत सिंह : क्या आप यह चाहते हैं कि जो छोटे उद्योग हैं, उनके ऊपर भी हम इस तरह के कंट्रोल, हर तरह के कंट्रोल हटा लें। ...(व्यवधान)

श्री सोमपाल : नहीं, कंट्रोल लगा रखा है। मैं कंट्रोल हटाने की बात कर रहा हूं। मैडम यह हाऊस को मिसलीड कर रहे हैं।

उपसभापति : मीठी बात हो रही है, उसमें आप इतनी कड़वाहट क्यों ला रहे हैं ?

Let him speak.

श्री अजीत सिंह : चीनी की बात हो रही हैं, उससे ज्यादा मीठी क्या चीज हो सकती हैं, उसके बावजूद सदस्यगण उत्तेजित हो रहे हैं। ...(व्यवधान)....देखिए उनका सवाल लाइसेंसिंग और डीलाइसेंसिंग का हैं, उसका इस सवाल से कोई मतलब नहीं हैं।

श्री सिकन्दर बख्त : सवाल तो उनका समझ लें...इतनी ज्यादती तो नहीं होनी चाहिए।

SHRI SOM PAL: Let him place the facts. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is permitting the use of vacuum pan technology by the small-scale sector, Khadi and village industries. I am not asking any question on delicesing. Delicensing is a different thing. What are the reasons that they are being denied the use of this advanced technology? It is a very limited question.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Som Paliji, may I tell you one thing? Suppose a question is tabled on sugar, it does not mean that on every gains of sugar, you can put a question. You should have tabled a separate question. As far as the sugar industry is concerned, it is a very big policy. There is an industrial policy. There is an export policy. There is an import policy. Then, it also includes proper distribution. We are specifically dealing with a question which is being put by Mr. Sarada Mohanty and Mr. Chimanbhai Mehta. Please confine yourself to that question. If you are not satisfied, I will be very happy if you put another question specifically for your problem. I will allow you. Mr. Kore.

SHRI SOM PAL: I had put a question which concerns augmentation of sugar production. My question was on production itself. The main question is concerning the production of sugar. Madam, I am sorry to say that instead of protecting me, the Minister is being provided undue protection by you. This is. (*Interruptions*). ..

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is not undue protection.

SHRI SOM PAL: I should have been given the production because this is a specific question. If vacuum pan technology is allowed in the small-scale sector, it goes a long way in solving the problem of sugar production which has been haunting us since Independence.

Madam, this is a very relevant question. I will abide by your decision.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am not taking decisions. I have to abide by certain rules.

SHRI SOM PAL: You should have directed him to answer the question.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: I have already replied.

SHRI SOM PAL: No. You have not given any reply. Why are you not allowing the small-scale sector, the village sector, to use the advanced technology? What is the reason?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: I have replied to it.

SHRI SOM PAL: You have not given any reason. Madam, I wish you had directed the Minister to provide a reason. If he gives the reason, I will be satisfied.

उपसभापति : मंत्री जी, आप मेहरबानी करके उनको चिट्ठी लिख कर जो भी पॉलिसी आपकी हो, इंडस्ट्रियल पालिसी ...(व्यवधान)...एक सेकेंड.....(व्यवधान)...आप एक मिनट बैठिए...(व्यवधान)...

He will write to you.

आप बैठिए सोमपाल जी ।

श्री सोमपाल : मैडम, ये पालिसी के सवाल हैं, चिट्ठी से नहीं...(व्यवधान)...

श्री अजित सिंह : मैडम, चिट्ठी ही नहीं, मैं चाहूंगा कि ये आएं और मैं उनको बताऊंगा भी, चिट्ठी भी लिखूंगा और उन्हें बताऊंगा जो भी आप कहेंगी ।

उपसभापति : आप मुझे भी उसकी कॉपी दीजिएगा ।

एक माननीय सदस्य : हाउस में सवाल पूछिए । ...(व्यवधान)...

प्रो० विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा: ये हाउस को बताएं...(व्यवधान)...

उपसभापति :

I am not allowing. Please sit down. I am not allowing. The problem with the Members is that they don't realise the limitations of the Question Hour. The rule says, it should not discuss the policy matter. You please read the rules. But it is being expanded to such an extent, that it becomes a policy discussion. As I said earlier, in one hour we cannot discuss the entire policy. If you want to discuss it, we can find some other time to discuss the entire sugar policy. I have no objection to it. Mr. Som Palji, you can write to the Minister. He will discuss it with you. I would also like the Minister to write to you. He can send me a copy of it. Now, I hope you are satisfied. ... (*Interruptions*)... No, no, please. That is enough.

SHRI SOM PAL: It is not a policy decision. It is an administrative decision which the Ministry should take.

SHRI PRABHAKAR B. KORE: Madam, as per the Minister's reply, the sugar production for the year 1994-95 is estimated at 118 lakh tonnes. But I think actually we have crossed more than 145 lakh tonnes. I would like to know from the Minister whether the Government has estimated the production of sugar for the year 1995-96. That is part (a) of my question.

Part (b) of my question is, if they have more than... (*Interruptions*)...

उपसभापति : अभी "ए" ही कर लीजिए, "बी" में तो बहुत टाइम चला जाएगा । एक ही हो जाने दीजिए

because I have got so many names.

SHRI PRABHAKAR B. KORE: It concerns the import of sugar. Sugar

production during the year 1994-95 was more. Naturally, sugar will become surplus in the country. When the sugar is surplus, will the Government cancel the import of sugar which they are thinking of doing?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: For 1995-96, it is too early to estimate the sugar production. As for the import, as already said, our aim is to make sure that there is enough sugar. This decision was taken in December last year when the estimates were not that high.

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : उपसभापति महोदया, चीनी के उत्पादन में बहुत ज्यादा उतार-चढ़ाव होता है । कभी तो हम ज्यादा प्रोडक्शन कर देते हैं और कभी कम होने पर विदेश से जल्दी-जल्दी मंगाने की बात करते हैं । ऐसा इसलिए होता है कि चीनी के जो मिनिस्टर हैं, वह हमें लगता है कि हमारे यह मिनिस्टर महोदय नहीं हैं बल्कि मिस्टर मानसून चीनी के मिनिस्टर हैं । तो मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि चीनी को नियमित करने के लिए हमारे मिनिस्टर भी कुछ करेंगे या मानसून पर ही सब कुछ छोड़ दिया है ?

श्री अजित सिंह : मानसून के ऊपर तो सभी चीज़ डिपेंड करती है । पूरी इकॉनॉमी ही मानसून पर डिपेंड करती है । शुगर प्रोडक्शन एरिया किसान बढ़ाएंगे या कम करेंगे, क्या इरीगेशन का उसमें इंतजाम है, यह रेगूलेशन तो आप नहीं चाहेंगे कि हम किसान को कहें कि उसको गन्ना बोना ही है । अगर उनको प्राइस ठीक मिलेगी तो ज्यादा गन्ना बोएगा और अगर प्राइस कम मिलेगी तो उसको इतनी फ्रीडम तो है ही कि वह दूसरी फसल बोए । लेकिन जहां तक मानसून का सवाल है, इरीगेशन का भी इंतजाम है शुगर में, और जहां कम भी हुआ है, फिर भी लास्ट ईयर 98 लाख टन शुगर पैदा हुई थी । तो रेगलेशन तो हम नहीं कर सकते हैं । यह इन्करेज करने की बात है और जो हम फ्री सेल शुगर रिलीज करते हैं, लेवी प्राइस फिक्स करते हैं कि शुगर मिल्स वाएबल रहें, उसके पीछे यही उद्देश्य है कि किसान अपना गन्ना बोता रहे ।

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Madam Deputy Chairperson, year by year, the area for cultivating sugarcane is going down. Except Tamil Nadu, in all the States, the area under sugarcane cultivation is going down. The Government must take that also into consideration when they go in for export. Madam, I remember, when Babuji was the Food Minister, he was always saying, "I determine the sugar prices." When I was also a Minister, we used to discuss this. He said, "Nobody can decide the sugar prices. Only I can do it. I decide in respect of release both for the free market and for the quota market." Madam, I would like to know the meaning of 'buffer stock' from the hon. Minister. There is an in-built machinery, in the policy itself, by which sugar can be released into the free market depending upon whether the Government decides to make the prices go up or down. If there is an in-built machinery for buffer stock, why should the stock not be built? Why should the industry not be told that they should stock so much sugar at the cost of the exchequer?

Secondly, we have to be careful in exporting mass consumption items. Once it is known that a particular commodity is going to be exported, immediately its price goes up. As such, when the area under sugarcane production is going down, will the Government take care to see that because of the export the price of sugar does not go up and the common people are not hard-hit?

श्री अजित सिंह : जैसा माननीय सदस्य ने कहा, शुगर की प्राइस बहुत हद तक डिपेंड करती है कि कितनी फ्री सेल शुगर हम मार्किट में रिलीज करते हैं और बफर स्टाक में जो मैकेनिज्म है कि हरेक मिल जितना प्रोडक्शन है उसी के प्रपोरशन में फ्री सेल में शुगर रिलीज की जाती है । तो स्टॉक उस शुगर मिल के पास ही रहता है । बफर स्टाक का मतलब है कि

म एश्योर कर रहे हैं कि उनको वक्त क्रैडिट मिलता रहे, फाइनेंस चार्जिज, जिससे वह किसानों को समय पर पैसा दे सकें।

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : समय पर पैसा देते भी हैं क्या ?

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज : यह बहुत ही खुशी की बात है कि इस बार देश में चीनी का उत्पादन हमारी घरेलू खपत से कहीं ज्यादा होगा। ऐसे में सुरक्षित भंडार बनाने या निर्यात करने का निर्णय तो अभी सरकार ने नहीं लिया है लेकिन मैं मंत्री जी से जानना चाहती हूं कि क्या इस बार देशवासियों को चीनी सस्ती दिलाने का निर्णय सरकार ले रही है ? क्योंकि दामों का सीधा संबंध डिमांड और सप्लाई पर आधारित है। अगर मांग से ज्यादा उत्पादन देश में हो रहा है तो कम से कम देश के गरीब यह एहसास कर सकें कि देश में चीनी का उत्पादन ज्यादा हुआ है तो इस बार चीनी के दाम कम होंगे। मैं जानना चाहती हूं कि चीनी के दामों को सस्ता करने का फैसला सरकार करेगी ?

श्री अजित सिंह : जहां तक पी० डी० एस० का सवाल है, हमने चीनी के दाम, शायद पिछली बार 1994 में तय किए थे, उसके बाद नहीं बढ़ाए और फ्री सेल शुगर प्राइस भी पिछले 6 महीनों से स्टेबल है। बल्कि जो जून में काटा दिया गया है ... **(व्यवधान)** ... उसके बाद प्राइस कुछ कम हुए हैं। लेकिन मैं माननीय सदस्यों को बताना चाहूंगा कि शुगर इंडस्ट्री में फारमर्स का इंटरेस्ट, कन्ज्यूमर्स का इंटरेस्ट और इंडस्ट्री भी वाइवल हो, इन तीनों चीजों का ध्यान रखना है। अभी एक माननीय सदस्य ने कहा कि फारमर्स का पैसा नहीं मिला है, उनका बकाया पैसा शुगर मिलों पर है। तो हमको यह भी देखना है कि शुगर मिलों की यह केपैसिटी हो कि वे फारमर्स को पैसा दे सकें।

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज : यह आप जो आयें-बायें करके बता रहे हैं इसका क्या अर्थ है। आप सीधा बताइए कि चीनी के दाम सस्ता करेंगे या नहीं ?

World Bank assistance for rubber Board

*743. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Rubber Board has accepted the assistance from the World Bank;

(b) if so,, what are the projects approved and the terms and conditions of the World Bank assistance; and

(c) what is the period stipulated for the repayment of this assistance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The World Bank Assisted Rubber Development Project provides for expansion and strengthening of rubber plantation sector in India. The main components of the Project are:—

1. Replanting of old and uneconomic rubber in 40,000 hectares in traditional areas.

2. New planting in 30,000 hectares.

3. Productivity enhancement in 60,000 hectares.

4. Expansion/upgradation of rubber and rubber wood processing facilities.

5. Institutional strengthening of Rubber Board for project co-ordination, research, extension, training and technical assistance.

6. Development of women and tribal people amongst participants, particularly in Tripura.